

NWA
VOC FOR IOP/FN
NEWS ANALYSIS NO. 1-1906
JOHN ALBERT

DECEMBER 13, 1976

WASHINGTON REPORTS ON HELSINKI IMPLEMENTATION

ANNCR:

THE FORD ADMINISTRATION AND A CONGRESSIONAL STUDY GROUP HAVE ISSUED SEPARATE REPORTS ON WHAT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED IN THE SIXTEEN MONTHS SINCE THE FINAL ACT OF THE HELSINKI CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE WAS SIGNED. VOA NEWS ANALYST JOHN ALBERT LOOKS AT THEIR FINDINGS.

VOICE:

THE U.S. CONGRESS CREATED A SPECIAL COMMISSION TO MONITOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HELSINKI PLEDGES. BOTH A STUDY GROUP OF SEVERAL CONGRESSMEN AND THE FORD ADMINISTRATION HAVE NOW SENT REPORTS TO THIS COMMISSION. THERE IS NO TENDENCY IN EITHER REPORT TO BE POLETICAL OR TO OVERLOOK COMPLIANCE MEASURES TAKEN BY THE WARSAW PACT NATIONS. BUT BOTH REPORTS COME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THE RECORD OF THE WARSAW PACT NATIONS IS STILL "MINIMAL", PARTICULARLY IN THE AREA OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

THE CONGRESSIONAL GROUP, WHICH WAS REFUSED ENTRY INTO ANY WARSAW PACT NATION, SEES THE NEED FOR VIGOROUS ACTION ON WASHINGTON'S PART IN THE SIX MONTHS REMAINING BEFORE THE BELGRADE CONFERENCE WHICH IS TO REVIEW PROGRESS IN THE FULFILLMENT OF THE HELSINKI PLEDGES. PRESIDENT FORD HAS SAID THAT THE SUCCESS OF THE BELGRADE MEETING WILL DEPEND PRIMARILY ON CONSTRUCTIVE EFFORTS BY THE WARSAW PACT NATIONS IN THE PERIOD AHEAD.

THE FORD ADMINISTRATION STUDY REVIEWS THE UNEVEN EAST EUROPEAN RECORD IN GREAT DETAIL. BUT MOST IMPORTANT IS THE OVERALL POSITION THE UNITED STATES TAKES IN REGARD TO SOVIET AND EAST EUROPEAN ATTEMPTS TO INTERPRET THE HELSINKI COMMITMENTS IN A RESTRICTIVE FASHION. IN THE AMERICAN VIEW, WHICH IS SHARED

BY THE OTHER WESTERN NATIONS AND THE NEUTRALS, ALL ASPECTS OF HELSINKI MUST BE GIVEN EQUAL WEIGHT, AS SPECIFICALLY STATED IN THE HELSINKI DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES. THUS WASHINGTON NOTES WITH CONCERN THAT THE ATTITUDE OF THE SOVIET UNION AND ITS EAST EUROPEAN ALLIES CONTRAVENES THIS PRINCIPLE, RELEGATING THE HUMAN RELATIONS CONDITIONS OF THE FINAL ACT TO A SECONDARY POSITION. INSTEAD OF RECOGNIZING THAT SINCE HELSINKI THE FREER FLOW OF INFORMATION HAS BECOME A LEGITIMATE SUBJECT OF INTERSTATE RELATIONS, THE WARSAW PACT NATIONS INSIST THAT ANY CRITICAL INFORMATION CONSTITUTES AN INTERFERENCE IN THEIR INTERNAL AFFAIRS. THEY HAVE TAKEN THE POSITION THAT INFORMATION NOT TO THEIR LIKING DOES NOT CONTRIBUTE TO MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AND THAT INFORMATION WHICH IS CRITICAL OF COMMUNIST SOCIETY IS NOT IN KEEPING WITH THE SPIRIT OF HELSINKI.

A FEW STEPS HAVE BEEN TAKEN TO IMPROVE THE WORKING CONDITIONS OF JOURNALISTS AND A FEW TOKEN ADMISSIONS OF FOREIGN NEWSPAPERS HAVE OCCURRED, BUT, SAYS THE REPORT, THE GENERAL AVAILABILITY OF THESE MATERIALS HAS REMAINED VIRTUALLY UNCHANGED. AND THE SOVIET UNION AND SEVERAL EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES CONTINUE, IN CONTRADICTION OF HELSINKI, TO JAM RADIO LIBERTY AND RADIO FREE EUROPE.

THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS REPEATEDLY MADE REPRESENTATIONS IN MOSCOW AND EAST EUROPEAN CAPITALS REGARDING RESTRICTIVE PRACTICES IN VIOLATION OF THE SPIRIT AND LETTER OF THE FINAL ACT. WASHINGTON IS DETERMINED, IN CLOSE CONSULTATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS, TO PRESS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF PROVISIONS IN THE EAST WHICH HAVE TRADITIONALLY BEEN OBSERVED IN THE WEST.

THE UNITED STATES DID NOT EXPECT THAT HELSINKI WOULD CHANGE THE BASIC NATURE OF EAST-WEST RELATIONS OR EASTERN SOCIETIES

OVERNIGHT. BUT, SAYS THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT ON HELSINKI.,
"WE BELIEVE IT CAN CONTRIBUTE TO A RELAXATION OF TENSIONS
BETWEEN STATES AND TO PRACTICAL IMPROVEMENTS IN THE DAILY
LIVES OF PEOPLE." AS PRESIDENT FORD STATED WHEN HE SIGNED
THE HELSINKI ACCORDS, "HISTORY WILL JUDGE THIS CONFERENCE
NOT BY WHAT WE SAY HERE TODAY, BUT BY WHAT WE DO TOMORROW--NOT BY
THE PROMISES WE MADE BUT BY THE PROMISES WE KEEP."

JS/PY